The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service offers news economic and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor, covering in the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 20, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 MILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1660 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 5

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Why does labor keep harping on the theme of more representation on all war agencies?

If the first place, because it hasn't received real representation.

In the second place, because without such representation the great army of American soldiers of production cannot give their best for victory.

It is a shameful fact that after these long months of war the Government has failed to give labor a voice in the councils of even the civilian aspects of the war—with one notable exception.

That exception is the National War Labor Board, which is composed of an equal number of management, public and labor representatives. On this important board labor has a voice in shaping policies and in making decisions.

Common sense dictates that labor should be given a similar opportunity to participate in the operation of the War Production Board, the Office of Price Administration, the Office of Civilian Defense and other war agencies whose decisions affect the lives and welfare of the workers.

Window Dressing Not Enough

These agencies claim they have accorded labor some form of representation. The claim is false. At its most, some labor official has been given a post where he has no authority and serves merely as window dressing. Or, as in the War Manpower Commission, a labor-management committee is formed and given only advisory powers. This sort of representation is a completely unsatisfactory dodge.

It seems to us that America can learn a great deal from the experience of Great Britain in the matter of labor representation. Here, our Government officials feel that real labor representation is necessary only on bodies dealing with labor disputes. There, labor is welcomed into the high councils of the Government, is acquainted fully with the facts about every major war problem, is given a voice in determining the solution of these problems and is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the decisions arrived at among British workers.

That system has worked effectively in Great Britain. It has eliminated doubts and confusion. It has inspired confidence among the workers, who realize that their representatives have helped to make the decisions.

Furthermore, because they are fully informed and have become convinced of the necessity of certain forms of action, the leaders of labor in Great Britain are better able to persuade their members to make the sacrifices required of them from time to time.

Dangers Loom Ahead

Important decisions are approaching. America has reached the stage in this war where, more and more, we will be forced to depart from our normal way of doing things and resort to stringent war regulation by the Government.

No one wants this to happen. Everyone will be inconvenienced. A great many people will feel that they are being unnecessarily oppressed while others get off comparatively lightly.

Full labor representation at all war agencies can help to smooth out the enforcement of these new regulations, to obtain better compliance, to avoid bitterness and to maintain production and morale on the highest plane.

No one is going to like being told by the Government that he must stay on his present job at his present pay when better opportunities offer. No one is going to like being told by the Government how to spend his earnings. No one is going to relish various aspects of rationing, manpower controls, wage controls, and taxes, more taxes and more taxes.

But these things are almost certain to come. The form in which the regulations are issued, the flexibility with which they are drafted, the fairness with which they are administered and the laxity with which they are applied all constitute serious dangers unless those responsible have some practical knowledge of the dynamite which they are handling. Perhaps no one in the country is better equipped with practical experience in these respects and in closer touch with the persons affected than the representatives of organized labor. It would be wise for the Government to give them the opportunity to serve their country and its people in this way.

One Cane Was Not Enough

By JACOB A. GOLDBERG, Ph.D.
Secretary of the Social Hygiene Committee
New York Tuberculosis and Health Association
Public Health Consultant, American Social Hygiene Association

ARTICLE V

Did you ever see a man attempting to walk as if on four legs? I do not mean on hands and feet; I mean with two shaking legs and three shaking canes, the canes shaking because the hands and arms did. Of course, we are not thinking of cases of infantile paralysis, but rather of the condition known as locomotor ataxia. This is always due to invasion of the germ causing syphilis into the central nervous system. Fortunately, with modern treatment, if adequately carried out, such paralysis rarely occurs.

The man we are speaking about had been an efficient and effective worker in a machine shop. He was known to the writer for many years, particularly during his period of disability. When last he appeared, he was around a good deal, sowing his wild oats; disease followed naturally, as it were; he treated himself; he went to quack doctors for treatment; and when he finally came into the hands of competent family physicians it was too late, until he was past 40—it was too late. The inroads of disease had brought about this paralytic condition. He could not work at his trade and was not able to support his family, and gradually became a pauper. He was even ashamed to go out into the street, for he had a guilty conscience, knowing too late that through neglect he had brought this misery upon himself and upon his wife and children. He sat about the house and moped and cried but it was too late even for that.

He was another of that unfortunate group who are more to be pitied than blamed. Ignorance was largely at the basis of his troubles. Had he been properly informed of the dangers of syphilis and gonorrhea, the chances are at least even that he would have avoided his personal catastrophe. And further, had he been advised and taught that when in doubt, not to resort to self-treatment or to quack—advertising doctors—but to seek out competent medical advice, the chances again are at least even that he might be a healthy man today. Who knows?

Kansas Legislative Investigation Exonerates Unions On Fee Charges

Topeka, Kan.—The special committee of the Kansas legislative council, named last September to investigate the labor unions and alleged improper and illegal practices, has delivered to the report that it had found no union practices of any consequence that were illegal.

Charges of excessive initiation fees were found in the investigation to be without foundation or greatly exaggerated.

For instance, one report was that a man paid $200 to become a member of a job. The investigation revealed that the man had a vacation and that at the time a war job had actually cost him $800, in travel, time lost at his regular work and his payment of initiation fees and dues to the union.

The committee's findings denoted fabricated anti-labor propaganda, and that this State by Senator Clyde Reed and other politicians who sought public office on a union-smearing campaign. Many ugly rumors of graft and heavy payments for the "right to work" were probed by the legislative committee and found to have no basis in fact.

One of the chief complaints was that the government had set the wage scale with the building trades unions for the duration. Since the government was in charge of the projects, the question: "Why did I have to join the union to get a job" was asked.

"In the summer of 1941 the building trades unions agreed that there should be no stoppage of work on defense construction jobs," said the report. "In return the government agencies and, in most instances in Kansas, the contractors concerned approved to have existing closed shop or traditional union policies to defense and war construction, which, of course, included the closed shop."

An examination of many workers brought this statement from the committee:

"In every case where there has been a complaint or any question raised concerning union charges, the statements of the workmen involved have been found to be within the official regulations. Rumors were frequently found to be exaggerated, as was to be expected. In every instance, however, the committee found that the statement made by the workman himself as to fees charged in Kansas was correct as to the amount involved, and that this is agreed with the regulations and practices authorized by the union itself. In a most outstanding instance, regulations and schedules had been established for some years.

"In other words, the committee found that labor unions have been doing what was authorized by their regulations and bylaws, and that these fees and policies . . . are not new, but have been in existence for some time before the defense program expanded union activity in the State of Kansas. In general, no changes have been found tended more often to relax established policies or reduce fees for a definite period, than to increase fee schedules or to enforce stricter policies."

AFL And British Labor Meet To Formulate War Policies And Draft Specific Plans For Post-War Reconstruction; Executive Council Demands Full Representation On WPB

Council Asks Voice For AFL In Deciding War Production Program

Miami, Fla.—The American Federation of Labor officially demanded representation for labor on the outstanding committees of the War Production Board in order to expedite the war production program.

In a blunt statement, the Executive Council declared:

"We maintain that labor has a contribution to make in every aspect of war production—not merely in such fields as labor disputes and labor-management committees.

"The self-evident fact that the War Production Board must, of necessity, call for the complete cooperation of all groups interested in carrying the war to a successful conclusion. In the present framework of the War Production Board this condition does not prevail."

The Executive Council demanded labor representation in the following:

1—The offices of the Vice Chairmen.
2—The Requirements Committee.
3—Office of Civilian Supply.
4—Program and Facilities Bureaus.
5—Resources Review and Distribution Bureau.
6—Procurement Policy Committee.

"The situation is urgent," the council said, "and these recommendations should be put into effect as expeditiously as possible. There is no time to lose in securing this greater labor participation which will [illegible] labor and more effective prosecution of the war effort."

In a searching analysis of the present organizational [illegible] which excludes labor from the higher levels of operation at [illegible] making, the Executive Council declared:

"The War Production Board is organized on top through the offices of the two Vice Chairmen, one in charge of program determination and the other in charge of production. There should be representation in both of these offices where production and program policies are [illegible]ermined. The Office of Program Determination tops the Requirements [illegible] which we regard as the most important overall committee [illegible] of national economy. Although we recognize that this [illegible] of representatives from the various claimant agencies, [illegible] Maritime, Lend-Lease, Civilian Supply, Bureau of Econo[illegible]stics, a representative of the American Federation of Labor should be [illegible]ber of this committee and be in a position to know what the large program policies of the War Production Board are at any given moment. The participation of the American Federation of Labor at this point would reinforce the operating work of labor in the lower levels of the War Production Board. It would guarantee to labor that it was being considered and given the opportunity to know why and how the production program was being developed, and to be consulted in any given field. This would make for greater understanding on the part of the working peoples in the plants of the overall problems and policies of the War Production Board.

"To move the distrust which the workingmen and working [illegible]try now feel in relation to the various decisions and orders [illegible] made [illegible] without a voice by labor on important [illegible] about an entire change in their method of living. We feel that the representative of labor on this Requirements Committee should be named Vice-Chairman along with Messrs. Eberstadt and Wilson in order to effectuate this program.

"Under the office of Vice-Chairman in charge of Production there should be provision made for labor representation on the Production Executive Committee, Radio and Radar, Aircraft Production, Shipbuilding and Rubber Divisions.

"The Office of Civilian Supply is charged with the responsibility of planning and estimating civilian requirements for our entire economy. As a result of the shortage of critical materials and the tremendous curtailment of civilian economy, concentration programs have become an additional task for the Office of Civilian Supply. There is no other single group in the national economy which is more affected by what happens to a civilian economy than the working people. They are affected both as consumers and producers. Because of this dual interest it is the urgent opinion that the Office of Civilian Supply have designees from the labor movement actively participating in the top levels of their organizations. We advocate, as a first step, that the assistant Director in the Office of Civilian Supply be a recognized representative of the organized workers, capable of performing the job and be supplied with an adequate staff to carry out the functions of the position.

"It is necessary that labor should be represented in the Program Bureau which is charged with the responsibility of programming available supply of critical products, which include manpower requirements. It is just as obvious that in the Facilities Bureau, which is now handling all construction problems and available facilities for the War Production Board labor again should have effective representation.

"The newly formed Resources Agency, which encompasses the former Bureau of Industrial Conservation, is in urgent need of a labor representative to assist in such problems as scrap, salvage, standardization and simplification, all of which vitally affect the welfare of American workers. It would certainly provide a tremendous dynamic force in the entire salvage and scrap program if the workers of this country know that they were being represented in the highest councils of the government which head this program.

"We are also deeply concerned regarding the future of the Smaller War Plants Corporation designed to aid small manufacturing plants in receiving war contracts. Satisfactory arrangements had been made, we understand, to give doubtful regarding the recently announced change which has taken place. We earnestly hope that the arrangements heretofore entered into will be fully observed and that the Smaller War Plants Corporation will continue to function in the interest of the small manufacturing plants as heretofore."

AFL Council Opposes OPA Plan To Rescind Rail Rate Increases

Miami, Fla.—The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor opposed the recent request of the Office of Price Administration for a rescinding by the Interstate Commerce Commission of last year's railroad rate increases.

This action was taken after George M. Harrison, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Clerks, urged the issues in the movement for a wage increase backed by the standard railway unions.

The AFL council took the position that cancellation of the rate increases would work a railroad financial hardship, diminish the possibility of a wage increase and invite strikes.

The passenger rate increase was 10 per cent and the freight rate increase was 6 per cent. According to union estimates, the total rate increase amounted to $470,000,000 a year for all the carriers.

William Green, AFL president, issued the following statement:

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor believes it is a mistake for the Office of Price Administration to press for dismissal of its petition to rescind recent railroad rate increases. Railroad revenues are badly needed to meet national transportation demands. Wages of rail workers generally are very low and they must be raised to eliminate injustice and assure adequate wages for their treatment. Unless those intolerable low wage conditions are corrected, rail transportation will fail. The AFL now is the serious shortage of workers in this industry and additional needed workers cannot be recruited at existing low wages."

2,106 COMPENSATION LAW VIOLATORS FINED $10,903

New York City.—Investigations conducted by the Investigating Unit of the Workmen's Compensation Division, State Labor Department, during 1942 led to 2,337 criminal prosecutions of employers in the New York City Compensation District for violation of the State Workmen's Compensation Law. In these prosecutions, 2,106 convictions were found by the courts, 106 complaints were dismissed or withdrawn, and 125 cases were pending at the end of the year.

Fines were imposed on 1,807 of those convicted, for a total of $10,903; sentences were suspended in 489 convictions.

Of the prosecutions, 444 were special "evasion cases," where the Labor Department alleged the defendants attempted to evade the law by fake partnerships and/or sub-contracts. In these cases, 398 were convicted and 46 complaints were dismissed.

AFL WILL EXTEND AID TO LOCAL GOV'T WORKERS

Miami, Fla.—AFL President William Green announced that he will direct all State Federations of Labor and all city central bodies to give every aid and assistance to the members of the State, County and Municipal Workers Union in their efforts to obtain higher wages and pay for increased living costs.

Because of the National War Labor Board's decision that it has no jurisdiction to pass upon wage questions involving State, county and municipal workers, these employes will have to depend upon the fairness of the Government agencies which they serve for action. Their appeals, Green said, should be supported by the State and central bodies of the AFL.

At the same time, the Executive Council adopted a resolution approving legislation desired by employes of the Federal Government to obtain wartime wage bonuses.

Labor Compulsion Opposed By AFL

Miami, Fla.—The executive council of the American Federation of Labor opposed compulsory national service legislation on the ground that it would retard rather than increase war production.

President Green told a press conference that the council had considered the proposed national service bill introduced by Representative Thomas A. Jenkins, R., Ironville, Ohio, a New York lawyer, and that "while we found some good features in it we found some sections that were objectionable."

Mr. Green was critical of the section in the Clark proposal dealing with labor safeguards and declared that these provisions were "inadequate."

"I was directed to take up our objections with those sponsoring the legislation," explained Mr. Green.

"The Executive Council's opinion is that the present voluntary induction for voluntary action is not necessary at this time, that it will retard and not promote increased production for the war effort."

The AFL president told reporters that the council, as a result of a survey made by the Executive Council, that the workers of our nation are giving full and complete support to the war effort. The constructive genius, skill and ability of labor are reflected in the construction of ships, airplanes, tanks and war material of all kinds.

"The Executive Council expresses its deep appreciation of the record which labor is making in the national war effort and declares that the facts show that workers are deeply conscious of their obligation to work longer hours, to make sacrifices, to buy War Bonds, and to contribute in every possible way to the war effort.

"The Executive Council appeals to the workers of the nation to reach new heights and to set new standards in production. This appeal is based upon the existing war needs and it made in response to the request of the President that production be doubled.

"In order to achieve the purpose every worker must report for work each day unless prevented from doing so by illness, incapacity or circumstances over which he may have no control.

"The workers in industry are truly soldiers of production. It is the firm conviction of the Executive Council that absenteeism should be avoided. Failure to report for work regularly may cause hardship or death to soldiers enlisted in the armed forces who must serve on the field of battle. Among these armed forces are the relatives of production workers who are serving in the workshops, production plants, factories and on the transportation lines of the country, producing the goods and supplies needed by the armed forces in order to win the war.

"Full and regular report to his post of duty each and every day and be on the job regularly and continuously in the industrial plants of the nation, serving in that capacity as faithfully as the soldier serves on the battlefield."

TRADE UNIONISTS BACK COMMUNITY WAR CHESTS

New York City.—"This year American trade unionists will contribute at least $10,000,000 through United Nations Relief of the American Federation of Labor, War Relief Chests, the Labor League for Human Rights," whose president is Matthew Woll, announced.

"Labor's war relief program," the Labor League said, "includes substantial support for the activities of the labor movements in occupied Europe and Asia.

"Millions of workers who stay at their machines around the clock and around the calendar will have the satisfaction of knowing that their dollars are bolstering the ranks of an intrepid band of guerilla fighters who are harassing the enemy behind his lines."

$1,500,000 WAR RELIEF FUND PLANNED BY ILGWU

New York City.—A war relief fund expected to total $1,500,000, for distribution among war relief organizations in the United States and abroad and among domestic community aid agencies, has been decided upon by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, President David Dubinsky announced.

The money will be raised in the form of a day's pay, during February and March, and will be contributed by the 200,000 members of the union in all parts of the country.

WOOD RIVER UNIONISTS BUY $329,859 WAR BONDS

Washington, D. C.—Secretary R. H. Sanders of the Wood River, Ill., Central Labor Union, advised AFL President Green that the complete returns revealed that the affiliated locals and their members had purchased $329,859 worth of war bonds.

Fullest Exchange of Information On War Problems Will Come From International Parleys

Miami, Fla.—Representatives of the American Federation of Labor and the British Trades Union Congress mapped a program of close cooperation between American and British workers at the first meeting here of the Anglo-American Labor Committee.

The meeting lasted the entire day and at its conclusion, AFL President William Green and Sir Walter Citrine, Secretary of the BTUC, announced the following objectives would be sought at future conferences:

1—Promotion of the greatest possible war production drive in both countries in order to win the war in the shortest possible time.

2—Fullest exchange of information regarding the treatment of vital labor and production problems in Great Britain and the United States.

3—Formulation of joint policies which will assure adequate labor representation at the peace conference following victory and give labor a voice in determining the post-war reconstruction program of the United Nations.

These objectives will be canvassed in greater detail and specific recommendations adopted when the conferences of the Anglo-American Labor Committee are resumed in Washington, D. C., on Feb. 10.

In the meanwhile, Sir Walter Citrine and the other four representatives of British labor who accompanied him to this country will get a much-needed rest at Carpenters' Home in Lakeland, Fla., where they will be guests of AFL Vice President Thomas Rickert.

The British delegates arrived here more than a week late and showed the effects of their rough transatlantic crossing. They plan to do extensive research and boil their suggestions down to concrete form while awaiting the resumption of the conferences, Sir Walter said.

Both he and President Green stressed the value and importance of the exchange of information on war labor problems which the conferences will afford.

Sir Walter explained that the British delegates can inform the AFL representatives of what Great Britain has done in the manpower problem, for instance. In this respect and several others, he indicated, Great Britain has advanced beyond this country because it has been in this war longer. At the same time, he said, the British expect to learn from us methods by which production has been so vastly increased and safeguards protecting labor's rights.

The British delegates first met with the entire AFL Executive Council and later with the five AFL representatives of the Anglo-American Labor Committee.

Members of this committee, for the British, are Sir Walter Citrine; F. Wolstencroft, Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers; A. Conley, National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers; H. N. Hairsine, National Union of General and Municipal Workers, and J. Marchbank, National Union of Railway Men.

The AFL members are President Green, and Vice Presidents William Hutcheson, Harvey Brown, George M. Harrison, and Matthew Woll.

Stay On The Job!

Miami, Fla.—American war workers were urged to stay on the job unless incapacitated in a statement issued by the AFL Executive Council to discourage absenteeism. The statement follows:

"It is clearly evident, as a result of a survey made and considered by the Executive Council, that the workers of our nation are giving full and complete support to the war effort. The constructive genius, skill and ability of labor are reflected in the construction of ships, airplanes, tanks and war material of all kinds.

"The Executive Council expresses its deep appreciation of the record which labor is making in the national war effort and declares that the facts show that workers are deeply conscious of their obligation to work longer hours, to make sacrifices, to buy War Bonds, and to contribute in every possible way to the war effort.

"The Executive Council appeals to the workers of the nation to reach new heights and to set new standards in production. This appeal is based upon the existing war needs and it made in response to the request of the President that production be doubled.

"In order to achieve the purpose every worker must report for work each day unless prevented from doing so by illness, incapacity or circumstances over which he may have no control.

"The workers in industry are truly soldiers of production. It is the firm conviction of the Executive Council that absenteeism should be avoided. Failure to report for work regularly may cause hardship or death to soldiers enlisted in the armed forces who must serve on the field of battle. Among these armed forces are the relatives of production workers who are serving in the workshops, production plants, factories and on the transportation lines of the country, producing the goods and supplies needed by the armed forces in order to win the war.

"Full and regular report to his post of duty each and every day and be on the job regularly and continuously in the industrial plants of the nation, serving in that capacity as faithfully as the soldier serves on the battlefield."

End Of Kaiser Case Demanded By 50 AFL West Coast Unions

San Francisco.—More than 50 local unions and metal trades councils representing 200,000 West Coast workers have sent letters to President Roosevelt and members of Congress threatening to withdraw their workers' pledges if the National Labor Relations Board persists in punishing all labor practices case against the three Henry J. Kaiser shipyards in the Portland, Oregon, industrial area.

According to John P. Frey, president of the metal trades department of the AFL, which has a membership of around 550,000 AFL workers on this coast, will join the campaign.

The letters recount the efforts of the metal trades unions to achieve stabilization in the shipbuilding industry on this coast and declare that "with the exception of our fellow trade unionists on the Gulf of Mexico, we are the only ones in any industry to establish continuous production in the war industries."

"In view of the extraordinary contribution which we have made to the war effort," the letters continue, "we are entitled to the support and the protection of every Federal agency and the national administration, but at the moments evidence of our trade union organization and our agreements is being threatened by the National Labor Relations Board.

"It is only through these organizations of ours we have built up, that we can secure the necessary protection for the sacrifices in our wage rates to conform with the President's request. We have abolished all calendar days so that continuous production can be carried on.

"We have maintained most cordial and cooperative relations with employers, but even though the nation is forced to stand alone we must withdraw the pledge we have made that there will be no stoppage of work on our part.

"The Kaiser shipyards in the Portland district have closed-shop contracts with AFL metal trades unions. The NLRB has complained that they have signed without a collective bargaining election.